



# Department of Justice

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## **HOGSETT ANNOUNCES CHARGES FOR RELEASE OF HAZARDOUS WASTE IN DOWNTOWN INDIANAPOLIS**

*Hazardous waste alleged to have flowed through streets of downtown neighborhood*

### **PRESS RELEASE**

INDIANAPOLIS – Joseph H. Hogsett, the United States Attorney, announced today that Euranus Johnson, age 51, of Indianapolis, has been charged with the unlawful storage and disposal of hazardous waste, as well as Social Security fraud, following an investigation by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Social Security Administration, Office of Inspector General.

“This office is committed to protecting the public from the dangers posed by hazardous waste and seeking just punishment for those whose proven disregard for the law puts our neighborhoods at risk,” said Hogsett. “If you choose to endanger others by cutting corners for easy profits, know that this office and our law enforcement partners will investigate and prosecute you to the fullest extent of the law.”

The information alleges that Johnson, the owner and operator of The Antique Chrome Shop at 1925 Massachusetts Avenue, near downtown Indianapolis, illegally stored and disposed of hazardous waste at the facility from January 2011 through June 2011. According to the allegations within the information, a renter at the property was washing the floor of the facility when the water reacted to chemicals left behind by Mr. Johnson. This allegedly caused a toxic green liquid to flow down the driveway into the streets of the nearby residential neighborhood.

Investigators and regulators with the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the Marion County Health Department, as well as the Indianapolis Fire Department assisted in the response to the chemical release. For more information on efforts by federal and local partners to clean the site, visit:

<http://www.epaosc.org/antiquechromeshop>

According to Assistant U.S. Attorney Zachary A. Myers, who is prosecuting the case for the government, Johnson faces a maximum of 5 years in prison and a \$50,000 per day fine on the hazardous waste charge, along with a maximum of 5 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine for the Social Security fraud charge. An initial hearing was held today before U.S. Magistrate Judge Kennard P. Foster. A hearing date has not been set in this case.

An information is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. A defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial at which the government must prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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